

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1705

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to honor Gladys Ann Hunter Sawyer upon her many personal and professional accomplishments.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to recognize Gladys Ann Hunter Sawyer, a lady who has given her all each and every day, believing strongly that "to whom much is given, much is required"; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Sawyer is a devoted and magnanimous daughter, wife, mother, sister, aunt, and friend; she loves her family dearly and has worked hard to provide them with comfort, experiences, and education; and

WHEREAS, a person who has worn many hats in her life, she has always been a force with which to be reckoned and has excelled as an artist, a writer, an entrepreneur, and a chef, exuding grace, class, and formidability in all of her endeavors; and

WHEREAS, born in Memphis on May 12, 1949, to Raymond Thomas and Bernice Hunter, Gladys Ann Hunter Sawyer was the oldest of her mother's nine children and the second of her father's five children; her birth position required her to mature quickly, as she took on responsibility for tending to her younger siblings; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Sawyer's grandmothers, Big Mama and Mama Frances, were important role models in her young life, as they taught her to sew, to cook, and to love learning; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from DuSable High School in Chicago, Illinois, Mrs. Sawyer moved back home to Memphis and attended Memphis State University, where she was crowned the first Miss Black Memphis State, joined the Epsilon Epsilon Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and served as secretary of the Memphis State 109; and

WHEREAS, she eventually returned to Chicago and completed her bachelor's degree at Roosevelt University; while working at an accounting firm, Mrs. Sawyer met and subsequently married her husband, Andrew Benjamin Sawyer, Jr.; she is the loving mother of two children, Michael Anthony Hooks, Jr., her pride and joy, and Tamara Ashley Sawyer, her legacy and sidekick; and

WHEREAS, while her children were young, Mrs. Sawyer embarked on several entrepreneurial endeavors, owning and operating Cooking with GAS catering in Evanston, Illinois, and, in conjunction with her husband, owning and managing the *North Shore Examiner*, a local paper, and *Brides Today*, the first bridal magazine targeted to women of color; and

WHEREAS, she later served as a senior marketing manager for NutraSweet and received several recognitions for her leadership, including honors from the Monsanto Corporation and *Dollars and Sense Magazine*; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, Mrs. Sawyer and her family returned to Tennessee to help care for her grandmother; during this time, she joined Trust Marketing as a vice president, served as a board member of the Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis and Girls Inc. of Greater Memphis, and became a member of the River City (Tennessee) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, she formed HGF, Inc., a highly recognized and regarded marketing and project management firm that serves clients from government and nonprofit agencies across the country; and

WHEREAS, due to Mrs. Sawyer's leadership and vision, HGF, Inc., remains successfully in operation today; both of her children worked for the company in the beginning of their professional careers and soon developed into business and community leaders in their own right; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her professional and community involvement, Mrs. Sawyer has enjoyed cooking and entertaining family and friends; passionate about the arts, she is a member of Jus' Us book club and a founder of Hattiloo Theatre's Whitman Sisters; and

WHEREAS, an avid seamstress, she has spent the last few years making quilts for her loved ones; ever an English major, she is known for the fierceness of her editorial red pen; and

WHEREAS, during her later years, Mrs. Sawyer's heart has belonged to her grandchildren, Morgan Alise and Miranda Alexis; she has enjoyed baking cookies, making mini quilts, reading, and playing with her girls; and

WHEREAS, fondly known as Nana, she has special relationships with many young people, including her great-niece and great-nephew, Ryan Phillips and Raegan Powell; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Sawyer has touched many through her Christmas cards, birthday cards and gifts, kisses, words of encouragement, and much more; and

WHEREAS, Gladys Ann Hunter Sawyer is fortunate to share love, respect, and companionship with her husband of forty-three years, Andrew Benjamin Sawyer, Jr.; her son, Michael Anthony Hooks, Jr., and daughter-in-law, Kenya; her daughter, Tamara Ashley Sawyer; her granddaughters, Morgan Alise and Miranda Alexis Hooks; her sisters, Maridale, Patricia, Bobbie Jean, Camille, and Geraldine; her brothers, Frederick, Rudolph, Darryl, and Boris; her aunt, Bobbie; her uncles, Tony and Merrill; her nieces, Denise, Gail, Cappie, Gladys, Robin, Nicole, Angela, Jazmyn, Denise, Tiffany, and Bailee; her nephews, Earl, Jamal, James, Ricky, Marcus, Michael, Sean, Rudolph, Jr., and Braylon; and a host of cousins, sister-friends, friends, and colleagues; and

WHEREAS, Gladys Ann Hunter Sawyer is a multi-talented lady who has excelled in her professional life while maintaining close, loving relationships with her family and friends, and she is worthy of our approbation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor Gladys Ann Hunter Sawyer upon her many personal and professional accomplishments, commend her life of purpose and commitment, and thank her for her many contributions to society and her community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.